

JURISDICTION:

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

General References:

This chapter summarizes D.C. statutes and regulations related to speed.
D.C. Code and D.C. Municipal Regulations (DCMR)

Basis for a Speed Law Violation:

Basic Speed Rule:

No person shall drive a vehicle at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions and having regard to the actual and potential hazards then existing. D.C. Code 40-703(a)(6) & 40-712(a) and Title 18 DCMR 2200.3

Statutory Speed Limit:

25 MPH D.C. Code 40-703(a)(6) & 40-712(a) and Title 18 DCMR 2200.6
15 MPH in alleys D.C. Code 40-703(a)(6) & 40-712(a) and Title 18 DCMR 2200.7
15 MPH in streets adjacent to school buildings or playgrounds when indicated by official signs D.C. Code 40-703(a) & 40-712(a) and Title 18 DCMR 2200.8 & 2200.9

Posted (Maximum) Speed Limit:

Based upon engineering and traffic investigations, the statutory speed limits may be increased or decreased on any highway. D.C. Code 40-703(a) & 40-712(a) and Title 18 DCMR 2200.2 Note: D.C. law does not specifically state whether different highway speed limits may be established either for different types of vehicles, for various weather conditions or for different times of the day.

Minimum Speed Limit:

I. No person shall drive a vehicle at such a slow speed as to impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic. D.C. Code 40-703(a) and Title 18 DCMR 2200.10
II. A person, driving at less than the normal speed of traffic, shall drive in the right-hand lane then available for traffic or as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway. 40-703(a) and Title 18 DCMR 2201.3

Posted (Minimum) Speed Limit:

None

Other:

Adjudication of Speed Law Violations:

Civil/Criminal Adjudication of Violation:

Excepted as Noted Under Miscellaneous Sanctions, All Speed Law Violations are Civil Offenses (Infractions). D.C. Code 40-712(d) and Title 18 DCMR 2200.11

Other:

Sanctions Following an Adjudication of a Speed Law Violation:

Criminal Sanctions:

Imprisonment:

Term (Day, Month, Years,
Etc.);

None

Mandatory Minimum Term:

Sanctions Following an Adjudication of a Speed Law Violation:
(continued)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Fine:

Amount (& Range):

Violation of Basic Speed Rule-\$25 Title 18 DCMR 2600.1

Violation of the Minimum Speed Rule-\$15¹ Title 18 DCMR 2600.1

Speed Limit Violations-\$15 to \$100 The fine imposed depends upon either the extent or type of the speeding offense.² Title 18 DCMR 2600.1

Mandatory Min. Fine (\$):

None

Other Penalties:

Traffic School:

A person may be invited to attend a Driver Safety Clinic if their point accumulation total ≥ 4 but is < 8 . See Footnote No. 2. Title 18 DCMR 303.4

Other:

Licensing Action:

Type of Licensing Action

(Susp/Rev):

Suspension or Revocation via the Point System³ D.C. Code 40-302 and Title 18 DCMR 303.1 & 303.3

Term of License Withdrawal

(Days, Months, Years, etc.):

Mandatory Minimum Term of

Withdrawal:

I. Suspension may be from **2 to 90 days** depending upon the seriousness of the offense. Title 18 DCMR 306.1

II. Revocation-**6 months** Note: For subsequent offenses, a longer revocation period is possible. However, such period must for a definite period of time. Title 18 DCMR 306.4

Miscellaneous Sanctions

Not Included Elsewhere:

Criminal Offense. A person is subject to criminal prosecution if they commit a traffic infraction and have already accumulated 12 or more points on their driving record within previous 18 months. Under such circumstances, they are subject to a jail term of not more than 10 days and/or a fine of not more than \$300. D.C. Code 40-613(a)

Other Criminal Actions Related to Speeding:

Exceeding Speed Limit by 30 MPH:

Sanctions:

Criminal Sanction:

Title 18 of the D.C. Municipal Regulations does not contain a specific fine sanction for a violation of Title 18 DCMR 2201.3. Note: Unless modified via regulation via the D.C. mayor, fines for traffic offenses are equal to the collateral or bond schedule established by the superior court for such offenses. D.C. Code 22-2101(1)

For speed ≤ 10 MPH over the limit, the fine is \$15. For speed ≥ 11 MPH but ≤ 15 MPH over the limit, the fine is \$25. For speed ≥ 16 MPH but ≤ 20 MPH over the limit, the fine is \$50. For speed ≥ 21 MPH but ≤ 25 MPH over the limit, the fine is \$75. For speed > 25 MPH over the limit, the fine is \$100. And, for driving too slowly, the fine is \$100. Title 18 DCMR 2600.1

Point System. Under the point system, a person's license can either be suspended if they accumulate 8 points or be revoked if accumulate 12 points. Points assessed for an offense stay on a person's driving record for 3 years. Four (4) points are assessed for any speeding violation, 2 points are assessed for other violations that are not related to an accident and 3 points are assessed for other violations that are related to an accident. Title 18 DCMR 303.1(b), (c) & (d) and 303.6

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Imprisonment (Term):
Mandatory Minimum Term:
Fine (\$ Range):
Mandatory Minimum Fine:

Not more than **90 days** Title 18 DCMR 2200.12
None
Not more than **\$300** Title 18 DCMR 2200.12
None

Administrative Licensing Action:
Licensing Authorized and

Type of Action:

Suspension or Revocation⁴ D.C. Code 40-302 & Title 18 DCMR 302.3

Length of Term of
Licensing Withdrawal:

I. Suspension-**2 to 90 days** depending upon the seriousness of the offense. Title 18 DCMR 306.1
II. Revocation-**6 months** Note: For subsequent offenses, a longer revocation period is possible. However, such period must be for a definite period of time. Title 18 DCMR 306.4
III. Four (4) points are assessed against a person's driving record. 18 DCMR 303.1(d)

Mandatory Action--Minimum
Length of License
Withdrawal:

None

Other:

Assessment. Serious traffic law offenders are required to pay the an assessment of **\$50 (mandatory) to \$250** which is used to finance the Crime Victim's Compensation Fund. 3-436 & *Parrish v. District of Columbia*, 718 A.2d 133 (D.C. 1998)

Reckless Driving:

Sanction:

Criminal:

Imprisonment (Term):

1st offense-Not more than **3 months** Subsequent offense (within 2 years)-Not more than **1 year** D.C. Code 40-712(c)

Mandatory Minimum Term
of Imprisonment:

None

Fine (\$ Range):

1st offense-Not more than **\$250** Subsequent offense (within 2 years)-Not more than **1,000** D.C. Code 40-712(c)

Mandatory Minimum Fine:

None

Administrative Licensing Actions:

Type of Licensing Action

(Susp/Rev):

Length of Term of License

Withdrawal Action:

Revocation D.C. Code 40-302(a) & Title 18 DCMR 301.1(d)

1st offense-**6 months** 2nd offense-**1 year** Subsequent offense-**2 years** D.C. Code 40-302 & Title 18 DCMR 306.5

Other Criminal Actions Related to Speeding:
(continued)

Reckless Driving: (continued)

Mandatory Term of License

Withdrawal Action:

1st offense-**6 months** 2nd offense-**1 year** Subsequent offense-**2 years** D.C. Code 40-302 & Title 18 DCMR 306.5

The licensing agency has discretionary authority to either suspend or revoked a person's license for this offense. Title 18 DCMR 302.3

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Other:

I. A person is also assessed 12 points against their driving record. See Footnote No. 3. Title 18 DCMR 303.1(h)

II. **Limited Registration Suspension.** The registrations of all vehicles owned by a person, who has been convicted of reckless driving involving a personal injury, must be suspended until the offender gives and maintains proof of financial responsibility. D.C. Code 40-437 & 40-438

III. **Assessment.** Serious traffic law offenders are required to pay the an assessment of **\$50 (mandatory) to \$250** which is used to finance the Crime Victims Compensation Fund. 3-436 & *Parrish v. District of Columbia*, 718 A.2d 133 (D.C. 1998)

Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operators⁵:

Grounds for Disqualification:

A person is disqualified (suspended) from operating a CMV if while driving such a vehicle they commit 2 or more "serious traffic violations"⁶ within a 3 year period. D.C. Code 40-1806(a)(4)

Period of Disqualification:

1st violation-1 year 2nd violation-10 years to life 3rd violation-Life D.C. Code 40-1806(b)

Period of Mandatory Disqualification:

1st violation-1 year 2nd violation-10 years 3rd violation-Life D.C. Code 40-1806(b)

⁵ A person who has obtained a commercial driver's license (CDL) and is qualified to operate a commercial motor vehicle. A commercial motor vehicle is defined as a vehicle used to carry either passengers or property and either has a gross vehicle weight of $\geq 26,001$ lbs., is designed to transport more than 15 persons, or is transporting hazardous materials which requires that the vehicle to be placarded in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation regulations. D.C. Code 40-1801(3)

⁶ The term "serious traffic violation" is not defined in the D.C. Code. However, under Federal regulations this term includes exceeding the speed limit by 15 or more MPH or reckless driving. 49 CFR 383.5